

News Release

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chincoteague Refuge Offers All-night Viewing of Perseid Meteor Shower on August 11th

If you're willing to stay awake, past your normal bedtime, for just one night; Refuge Manager Lou Hinds extends this special invitation to you. "Come visit Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on this special occasion and witness something truly amazing," said Hinds. "The refuge will be open all night from Tuesday evening, August 11 until dawn on Wednesday morning, August 12."

Most of us are familiar with the phrase, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" because it is a very popular English nursery rhyme. Just repeating the words out loud makes you stop and reflect upon a time when you too stared at the evening sky and wondered aloud about the surrounding universe.

Think about this for a moment. Have you ever personally witnessed multiple objects moving extremely fast, some radiantly beaming, as they streak across the night sky? Unless you're a regular star gazer, the answer is probably, "no."

What better reason do you need to visit Chincoteague Refuge on the evening of August 11th? "We plan to extend visiting hours later than normal, to permit overnight viewing of the Perseid Meteor shower," explained Hinds. "Anyone wishing to see the meteor shower must arrive on the refuge before the entrance gate closes at 10 pm. However, visitors, not wishing to stay overnight may leave at any time."

Public access to trails and other visitor facilities will be prohibited after 10 p.m., but beach parking will remain open. Please take note of one major change this year. All campfires will be prohibited after 10 p.m. to enhance nighttime viewing opportunities, especially since many people believe this is one of the most rewarding sky watching events of the year. Last year, local enthusiasts were encouraged to start searching for meteors as early as 9 pm in the evening.

The Perseid meteor shower begins in mid-July with a few meteors striking through the

sky each evening. The peak of the shower has been forecasted for the 11th and 12th of August, where spectators are likely to view 10 to 150 meteors per hour, if the skies are clear and dark. This famous meteor shower has been observed for over 2000 years, by spectators all around the world. To experience the shower in its full, it is recommended to view this annual event from an area away from large cities, where stars are not dimmed by light pollution.

For more information about the Perseid meteor shower observation at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, please call (757) 336-6122. Additional information on this meteor shower is available at: <http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/>.

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